

# REPORT TO THE NH CITIZENS COMMISSION ON THE STATE COURTS

12/18/06

## II. Public Access

	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Schedule</u>						<u>Action by Judicial Branch</u>
		<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>FY 2010</u>	<u>FY 2011</u>	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>FY 2013</u>	
1	Examine expansion of legal representation to civil litigants unable to afford counsel.							This is a policy issue with significant funding implications and it is primarily the domain of the legislature. At the same time, Chief Justice Broderick is meeting with more than a dozen prominent New Hampshire law firms to explore increased pro bono representation.
2	Study implementation of a "Civil Gideon."							This is a policy issue with significant funding implications and primarily the domain of the legislature. We have brought this recommendation to the attention of legislative leaders; judges and administrators will work with legislators to address this recommendation.
3	Fully fund legal services organizations.							This is a policy matter with significant funding implications and it is primarily the domain of the legislature.
4	Create a public education program for potential self represented litigants.	See Rec, 10, Pg.1						The most cost effective way of disseminating information about the courts to the public is expanded use of the judicial branch website. We have requested funds with which to hire a web support person in FY 2008 and FY 2009.
5	Permit "unbundled" legal services.							The Supreme Court has amended rules to permit "unbundled" legal services.
6	Expand "case manager" system.	See Rec. 2, Page 1						We are requesting funds with which to hire three Family Division case managers in FY 2008 and one Family Division manager in FY 2009. In addition, we are requesting funds with which to hire four case managers in the Superior Court and two case managers in the Probate Court in FY 2008.
7	Encourage use of non-lawyer professionals to provide basic law-related services.							This is the domain of the legislature (statute) and Attorney General (enforcement).
8	Develop "Uncontested Divorce Kit."	See Rec. 10, Page 1						The Judicial Branch offers a great deal of information about divorce in the "self help" section of the Superior Court web page. Hiring of a part-time web person will allow us to expand website information specific to uncontested divorces.
9	Provide para professional support to self represented litigants in uncontested divorces.	See Rec. 2, Pg. 1						The Judicial Branch is committed to maintaining its impartial role while expanding the use of case managers who assist self represented litigants in preparing their cases.
10	Make all court facilities fully accessible.							Under the direction of the Court Accreditation Commission, and with support from an Accessibility Specialist from the Governor's Commission on Disability, the Bureau of Court Facilities has prepared a comprehensive recommendation for facility improvements to address the Americans with Disabilities Act.
11	Deploy and use alternative communications devices to assist disabled litigants.	\$1,500						The Probate Court has deployed "pocket talkers," devices that amplify sound for the benefit of the hearing impaired in all Probate Courts.

\* = No new funds requested.